

Message Text

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61

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

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USIA-12 AID-20 RSR-01 MC-02 ACDA-19 GAC-01 /128 W

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R 181800 Z APR 73

FM AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

TO AMEMBASSY QUITO

SECSTATE WASHDC 2627

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GUAYAQUIL 418

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT

SUBJ: ARMY SEARCH OF BEACH HOUSES LEAVES SOUR TASTE IN GUAYAQUIL

1. EL TELEGRAFO OF YESTERDAY (TUESDAY) CARRIES A CURIOUS FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE TITLED " ZONE CHIEF REGRETS RAIDS IN PUNTA BLANCA". REMARKABLE MORE FOR WHAT IT CONCEALS THAN WHAT IT REVEALS, THE ARTICLE CONSISTS LARGELY OF AN APOLOGY BY GUAYAQUIL MILITARY ZONE COMMANDER COL. GUILLERMO DURAN ARCENTALES FOR THE BOTHER CAUSED BY AN ARMY SEARCH PARTY TO THE HOME OWNERS OF PUNTA BLANCA, AN EXCLUSIVE BEACHFRONT DEVELOPMENT NEAR SALINAS. DURAN DESCRIBED THE EXECUTION OF THE SEARCHES AS " EXAGGERATED" AND " UNDER INVESTIGATION", AND EXPLAINED THEY WERE CARRIED OUT AS PART OF A GENERAL SEARCH FOR A BAND OF THUGS WHO HAD KILLED A LOCAL FARMER AND A POLICEMAN .

2. CONGEN SOURCE (ONE OF THE AFFECTED PROPERTY OWNERS) HAS PROVIDED FURTHER AND SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERING DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT. TIME OF RAID (NEVER MENTIONED IN ARTICLE) WAS AT DAY-BREAK ON APRIL 13, THE PREVIOUS FRIDAY. HOWEVER, THE CRIME ALLUDED TO BY DURAN ONLY OCCURRED ON THE FOLLOWING DAY. ALSO, EYEWITNESSES TO THE RAID WERE INFORMED BY THE SEARCH PARTY - WHICH BROKE INTO EVERY LOCKED DOOR THEY COULD FIND AND RANSACKED EVERY CLOSET - THAT THE OBJECT OF THE SEARCH WAS A REPORTED ARMS SHIPMENT.

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3. SOME THREE DOZEN HOMES WERE INVOLVED, ALONG WITH A SUBSTANTIAL CROSS- SECTION OF GUAYAQUIL' S MOST IMPORTANT FAMILIES, AND ALL OF THEM ARE INFURIATED BY THE INCIDENT. THE FOLLOWING MONDAY ONE HOUSEHOLDER, A PERSONAL FRIEND OF THE PRESIDENT, REPORTEDLY TELEPHONED RODRIGUEZ WHO INDICATED COMPLETE IGNORANCE (AND CHAGRIN)

REGARDING THE AFFAIR. WE UNDERSTAND THE RAIDS WERE CARRIED OUT UNDER THE IMMEDIATE ORDERS OF A MAJOR MURILLO, CHIEF OF THE ARMY DETACHMENT OUTSIDE OF LA LIBERTAD (NEAR SALINAS). MURILLO HAS BEEN RELIVED OF HIS COMMAND BY THE GENUINELY EMBARRASSED COL. DURAN, WHO APPARENTLY HAD NO ADVANCE KNOWLEGE OF THE OPERATION (ALTHOUGH IT HAPPENED IN HIS AREA OF COMMAND) AND WHO HAS BEEN PERSONALLY APOLOGIZING TO THE AFFECTED FAMILIES.

4. THE STORY REGARDING THE CLANDESTINE ARMS SHIPMENT IS AN OBVIOUS RED HERRING. THE SUSPICION IMMEDIATELY ARISES THAT ORDERS FOR THE RAIDS CAME DIRECTLY FROM QUITO, FROM SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS WITH AN INTEREST IN EMBARRASSING PRES. RODRIGUEZ BEFORE THE GUAYAQUIL OLIGARCH. THAT SUCH ELEMENTS EXIST HAS RECENTLY BEEN ILLUSTRATED BY THE " INDUSTRIAL MOLINERA" CASE, A RESOLUTION OF WHICH STILL SEEMS TO EVADE RODRIGUEZ. THE EXTENT OF THEIR SUCCESS MAY PERHAPS BE MEASURED BY THE REACTION OF CONGEN SOURCE, WHO SAID HE WAS BEGINNING TO FEEL INCREASED UNEASE AT LIVING UNDER A MILITARY DICTATORSHIP, AND THAT THE LACK OF GUARANTEES AND THREAT OF ARBITRARY ACTION WAS COMING TO BE FELT AS AN " OPPRESSIVE" RESTRICTION ON EVERYDAY FREEDOM OF ACTION.
SHAW

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